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DR. BOUTON'S  
MEMORIAL DISCOURSE

BEFORE THE

Concord Female Charitable Society.



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A

## MEMORIAL DISCOURSE

ON OCCASION OF

THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF

The Concord Female Charitable Society,

DELIVERED IN

THE NORTH CHURCH,

CONCORD, N. H.

ON SUNDAY EVENING, JANUARY 26, 1862.

BY

NATHANIEL BOUTON,

PASTOR.

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CONCORD:

STEAM PRESS OF MCFARLAND & JENKS.

1862.

Soc 2758. 605

v



Laurence Shaw Mayo

8

CONCORD, February 5, 1862.

REV. DR. BOUTON:

*Dear Sir—At a meeting of the Directors of the CONCORD FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY, held on Friday, the 4th instant, it was unanimously*

*Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Rev. Dr. BOUTON for the very entertaining address delivered by him before the Society, on the evening of Sunday, January 26, and that a copy of the address be requested for publication.*

The undersigned were designated a committee to execute the purpose of the Society; and, while discharging their pleasing trust, desire to add their personal hope that the request of the Society may be granted.

MRS. SAMUEL COFFIN,

MRS. EZRA CARTER,

MRS. HENRY MCFARLAND.

TO THE MEMBERS

OF THE

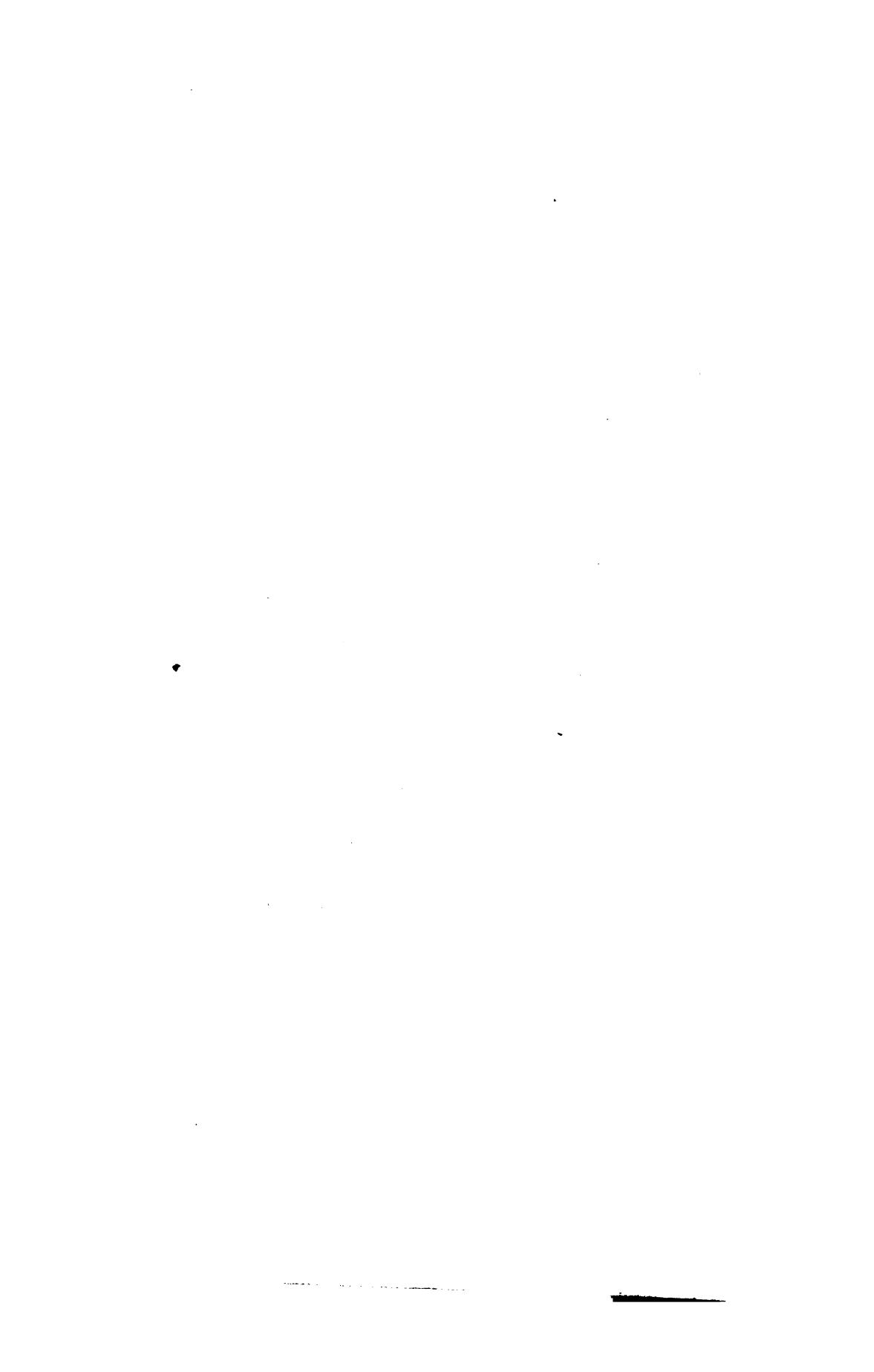
**CONCORD FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY**

(PRESENT AND FUTURE)

*This Memorial is very respectfully inscribed,*

**BY THE AUTHOR.**

**Concord, Feb. 11, 1862.**



## DISCOURSE.

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MATTHEW XXVI : 13.

Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

WE are assembled this evening to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Concord Female Charitable Society : an Institution whose origin, objects and results entitle it on this occasion to honorable mention, and form for it a MEMORIAL worthy to be handed down to future generations. In some points, there is a beautiful analogy between the case of the woman whose single act of affection and sacrifice for her Saviour is so highly commended, and that of this Society whose deeds we propose to rehearse and commemorate. These points of analogy will become sufficiently apparent in the course of our narrative.

In attempting to perform the pleasing though laborious work assigned me, this evening, I shall aim to gather the materials which have been accumulating through fifty years, and weave them into a history, with its various incidents, both to give interest to the details and distinctness to the whole. Most naturally we begin where the Society itself began ; that is —

### ITS ORIGIN.

It were easy at this time to put down the date *when*, and the place *where* this Society originated ; but its origin

has itself a history worthy of note and remembrance. To appreciate it aright, we must step back fifty years in the course of time, and survey things as they then were. Observe, therefore, that at that period Concord was a respectable farming town, containing less than three thousand souls, scattered over a surface more than seven miles square ; that all the territory and population were comprised in one parish, having a single pastor, whose office made it his duty to visit the poor, the sick and afflicted in the most remote districts ; to attend all funerals, and to exercise a pastoral care over the whole flock. Then no alms-house and farm furnished a home for the poor ; but those who were so unfortunate as to be of that class, and whom necessity compelled to ask aid of the town, were bid off annually, at the lowest rate that economy, not to say parsimony, could afford.\* Hence there were many cases where want pressed hard ; but the sufferers chose such a lot rather than be cast on the cold charity of the lowest bidder ! We will not stop here to descant on the difference between public and private charity : enough, that the one is a necessary gratuity, required, indeed, by beneficent law ; the other, a spontaneous gift, prompted by a kind heart. One, cold and thankless ; the other, warm and grateful both to the giver and the recipient.

We have alluded to the pastor as looking after the poor and sick of his flock. Let us accompany him in one of his rides on horseback to a remote district of the town. Starting from home on a cold morning in December, 1811, he passes through the West Parish village, and, by a round-a-bout road through what is called "the Borough," at the distance of seven miles, he dismounts at the door of an humble dwelling some twenty rods east of Horse-hill bridge. The man is an old soldier of the Revolution ;†

\* The valuable farm and alms-house where the city poor are now supported was established in 1827.

† Jonathan Urann, who deceased in 1840, aged 80 years.

his wife, a deranged woman who used to spend her insane violence in *whaling* the sides of their house with a huge stick. Entering, he finds want, sickness and suffering sadly blended. His heart is touched with pity ; he talks and prays with them. Returning at evening to his own comfortable home, the first sentence from his lips expresses the thoughts and wishes of his heart : “ *They are very poor, and an effort must be made for their relief.*” But what kind of effort ? Who should furnish the relief ? At this period, please bear in mind, there was here no charitable society for the relief of the poor. With the exception of the Cent Institution, formed\* among a few godly women to aid the New-Hampshire Missionary Society, there was no charitable organization of any kind in the town. What kind of effort, then, should be made to relieve this case of extreme poverty ? A call was at once made on a few families, and articles of provision and clothing furnished, which were sent by the hands of the pastor, on his next visit, to this destitute family. This was the beginning.

#### THE SOCIETY ORGANIZED.

Let us now transfer ourselves from the house of the pastor to that of a distinguished civilian, a gentleman of high position in society, of accomplished manners, liberal views, comparative opulence, and generous christian philanthropy. At the residence of the Hon. THOMAS W. THOMPSON, on the spot where the Pleasant Street Baptist Church is now erected, was gathered, near the close of the month of December, a small social party, such as in former days often added to the pleasure and improvement of Concord society.† “ We were greatly obliged,” said Mr. Thompson to the wife of the pastor, “ for the opportunity recently afforded of assisting the distressed. When similar ones should occur, I would be glad to make the

\* Formed by the agency of Mrs. Elizabeth McFarland, in 1804.

† Mr. Thompson afterward moved, and died in the ancient Dea. George Abbot house on Fayette street.

pastor my almoner." Then came out a thought which the pastor's wife had for some time been revolving in her heart : "*Why might not a SOCIETY be formed for the purpose of relieving the poor and suffering among us?*" At this point I wish to notice a beautiful illustration of the law of mental association — a single link only in the chain which connects one event with another — whereby continuous influences are extended from one individual, family, society, and even age, to another, until unthought-of and wonderful results are reached. Before Mrs. McFarland came to Concord, she was accustomed to meet, at her mother's house, in Boston, with a little company of praying women, who also gave much alms to the poor by contributing to charitable societies there existing. From this sprung in her mind the thought of forming such a society here. As her suggestion to that effect met a favorable reception in the party at Mr. Thompson's, Mrs. McFarland drew up a suitable paper, proposing the formation of a charitable society. It was put into the hands of two young ladies,\* to obtain the signatures of such women as were willing to join. Singular as it may now seem, serious objections were made to the proposal. "There are no poor among us to require such a society." "It will only encourage indolence and vice." "It is an officious intermeddling with the business of the selectmen, whose duty it is to provide for the poor." And "who knows," says another, "but the money will be perverted to bad uses?" Notwithstanding these and such like objections, the names of twenty ladies were obtained in favor of the object ; and on the evening of Tuesday, January 9, 1812, these twenty ladies met at the house of Mr. Thompson, where the first suggestion was made, and then and there formed the CONCORD FEMALE CHARITABLE SOCIETY — unanimously adopting and signing a Constitution, which Mrs. McFarland, with counsel from

\* Miss Sarah Kimball and Miss Sarah Thorndike; one living at the north, the other at the south part of Main street.

her husband, had previously drawn up. The terms of membership, at first, were the payment of *one dollar* on admission, and the same sum annually as long as membership continued.

To us, at the distance of fifty years, this may seem a small matter—"a day of small things;" but to them, it was an event of great moment, prospective of blessed beneficial results. "Our plan," say they, "is presented as a feeble plant for protection and nurture; but with the humble prayer that it may become a vine, whose branches shall afford shade and nutriment to the latest posterity." I ought to add, that latent in the mind and heart of the founder of the society, was the idea and the hope that it might be matured into an **ORPHAN ASYLUM.**\*

Why should we not here pause, to pay a deserved tribute to the worthy women whose hearts prompted them thus to unite in a Society for so laudable a purpose—a Society whose works are a **MEMORIAL** that shall be spoken of in future generations.

#### ORIGINAL MEMBERS.

Their names—which are as follows—will awaken pleasing reminiscences in the minds of some present who knew them, and may serve to stimulate others to an imitation of their virtues.

1. Mrs. MARY BARKER, who deceased at Chester, July 27, 1828, wife of the late Mr. Lemuel Barker, long and well known as the keeper of the Washington Hotel, at the north end of Main street.
2. Mrs. ISMENIA BUTTERS, deceased, wife of Mr. Timothy Butters, a taverner, at the south end of Main street.
3. Miss ANNA A. BRADLEY—sister of Richard Bradley, Esq.—who married the late John S. Barrows, Esq., of

\* We acknowledge that in the youthful mind of the society was blended the sanguine hope that, at some time, we should be able to combine with it something like an orphan asylum."—*Mrs. McFarland's Memoir*, p. 190.

Fryeburg, Me., and who still resides there, a constant friend and helper of the poor.

4. Miss MARY COFFIN, a devout woman, sister of the late Capt. Enoch Coffin, and who deceased in June, 1815.

5. Mrs. DOLLY DUNCAN, who died in Massillon, Ohio, wife of William Duncan, Esq., a reputable trader in Concord.

6. Mrs. MARY EMERY — afterward wife of Hon. Francis N. Fisk — who deceased in February, 1847; frugal, discreet, courteous and obliging — her memory is precious.

7. Mrs. MARY ANN GREEN, wife of the late Judge Samuel Green, died in Hopkinton.

8. Miss MARY GREEN, who yet survives, and who has retained her membership, whether resident here or elsewhere — a director, and for several years treasurer of the Society — first the wife of Hon. Moses Hazen Bradley; now the widow of the late Nathan Stickney, Esq., himself an early patron, adviser, and friend of the Society.

9. Mrs. MEHITABLE HARRIS, deceased; an energetic, accomplished and benevolent lady, wife of Robert Harris, Esq., a merchant in Concord.

10. Miss HARRIET HARRIS, daughter of the preceding, deceased.

11. Mrs. LUCINDA HOUGH, who deceased in 1826 — a lady always delicate, precise and complaisant — wife of the late George Hough, Esq., the prime and veteran printer of Concord, whose “pauses” were the type of his character.

12. Mrs. CHARLOTTE KENT, who died in 1820, aged 52 — whose social qualities, accomplishments and benevolent spirit made her an object of universal esteem — the first wife of the late Col. William A. Kent.

“ ’T was her’s to give to social life a charm,  
And make her home the residence of joy.”\*

13. Mrs. RHODA KIMBALL, wife of the late Mr. Benjamin Kimball; until the close of life, in May, 1852, at the age

\* Inscription on her gravestone.

of 81, she continued a member of the Society and a kind helper of the poor.

14. Miss SARAH KIMBALL — for thirty years Secretary of the Society, since an honored Vice-President, and always one of the most active and useful members — still lives, full of pleasing reminiscences of the Society's early labors, and present to give sanction to this evening's commemoration.

15. Mrs. SARAH LIVERMORE, daughter of the late Judge Timothy Walker, and widow of Major Daniel Livermore; first President of the Society, which office she held sixteen years; whose judgment, efficiency, economy and patronage gave character to the Society, and who retained her interest in it till her death, in 1843, at the age of 79.

16. Mrs. ELIZABETH MCFARLAND, the humble, unenvied founder of the Society, first Director twenty years, and six years President, until her death. Her memory is in our hearts, her praise on our lips; — her charity was a life-offering to her Saviour — very precious, like Mary's ointment of spikenard; often she poured out her prayers and tears of affection at the feet of her Saviour, and rose to minister to his poor disciples. She died November 9, 1838, aged 58 years. On her tombstone is written, "SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

17. Mrs. ELIZABETH THOMPSON, first Treasurer of the Society; the worthy companion of Hon. Thomas W. Thompson, at whose hospitable mansion the Society was organized. She deceased in 1834.

18. Miss ISABEL THOMPSON, sister of Mr. Thompson, also deceased.

19. Mrs. MARY THORNDIKE, afterward wife of the late Abiel Walker, Esq.; several years a Director of the Society, who died in 1849, at the age of 76. Her gentle spirit, soft words, and kind acts made friends, not only of the poor, but of all who knew her.

20. Miss SARAH THORNDIKE, who afterward married Mr. Moses L. Sargent, of Pittsfield, and is deceased.

Thus it appears, that of the original twenty members only THREE are still living, of whom only two are yet *of us* and *with us* on this fiftieth anniversary! But may I not be permitted to add the names of two or three others, who joined the first year, or soon after the Society's organization; who have held useful offices in it, and survive to greet us on this occasion. Mrs. MARY ANN STICKNEY,\* many years a Director of the Society, now in her 90th year; but still extending charity to the poor, although it be with dim vision and trembling hand. Mrs. WILLIAM Low and Mrs. BENJAMIN DAMON, truly "sisters of charity," one President of the Society two years, and both formerly Directors and still paying members.

Let it be added, that at the organization of the Society, under the Constitution,

Mrs. Sarah Livermore was chosen President.

Miss Sarah Kimball, Secretary.

Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, Treasurer.

Mrs. McFarland,

Mrs. Thompson,

Mrs. Thorndike,

Mrs. Rhoda Kimball,

Mrs. Livermore, *ex-officio*,

} Directors.

#### OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

We need hardly ask, What OBJECTS did the Society, thus organized, propose to accomplish? The name which they assumed indicates their object in general. But "charitable" is a broad term in its application. In its ordinary sense, it means benefactions to the poor, aid to the sick and afflicted, and relief for the unfortunate. Did the Society, then, propose merely to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, nurse the sick, and extend a helping hand to the poor and unfortunate? Did they, in short,

\* Mrs. Stickney was present to hear the Discourse. Mrs. Low and Mrs. Damon were detained by ill health and the inclemency of the weather.

design merely to relieve *temporal* wants? Or, with this in view, had they higher aims and purposes? These questions have a definite answer in the records. From the first they had in view a charity that should reach the intellect and heart; that should raise the objects of their beneficence to temporal comfort, to moral virtue and to a blessed spiritual and immortal life. Hence, in their first report,\* they say: "The cause in which we are engaged is the Lord's; we may expect his blessing upon it. Relying on the divine promise for support, let us extend our views and exertions; may no diminutive objects terminate our sight. Let us not desist while there is an object of temporal distress to relieve, an ignorant child to instruct, or an immortal soul to save!"

#### MEANS EMPLOYED.

We inquire, then, more at large, what MEANS did the Society employ for the accomplishment of its charitable designs?

1. In recounting the means, we should be unjust to them as well as to our own convictions, not to specify what might least be observed, that all their charitable labors, from the first, have been preceded, accompanied and followed with prayer. Every meeting of the Directors, for fifty years, has been opened with the reading of a portion of scripture, and prayer for God's blessing.

2. As to *pecuniary* means, the resources of the Society, for the first fourteen years, were limited to the sums paid on admission, and annually, by the members, together with such donations as might be given by persons friendly to the object. Sums, so received, were most gratefully acknowledged, and the names of the donors placed on record. Hence, at this distant day, we are gratified to find that from January 9, 1812, to January 5, 1813, the

\* Drawn up by Mrs. McFarland.

Society received and acknowledged donations from the following persons:

Captain Joseph Duncan,	\$2.00
Captain Nathan Stickney,	1.00
Captain Joseph Walker,	1.00
Mr. William Kent,	1.00
Mrs. Ellen Noyes* (of Salisbury),	1.00

A dollar, at that day, was a *cash* article, not often handled, nor so easy as now to slip from female fingers! Every cent not necessary to purchase articles for the poor was carefully husbanded, in order that "a sufficient sum might be acquired to enable the Society to diffuse their charity beyond the objects specified"—that is, relieving the temporal wants of the poor. This explains a remarkable fact in the economical policy of the Directors. At the close of the first year, after assisting seventeen families, at an expense of about twenty-three dollars, they had remaining in the treasury fifty-three dollars and thirty-six cents, which they put at interest! One can hardly figure up whence so large a sum could be derived; but the mystery is, perhaps, explained by the addition of seventeen members the first year. Payment in advance, for the second year, would make thirty-seven dollars, which, with the donations, added to the annual tax and admission fees, may account for the sum invested. To make sure that no charity should be misappropriated, it was made the duty of the Directors to visit and "ascertain, from time to time, by personal inspection, the proper objects of charity, with the nature of their wants." Here we may add, that with such prudence and economy have the charities of the Society always been conducted, that at no time has its treasury been overdrawn.

3. Let us now inspect the *working* department of the Society. But, in order to do this, we must visit the rooms

\* Wife of Parker Noyes, Esq., of Salisbury, and sister of Hon. T. W. Thompson.

of the Directors. Aside from funds, the responsibility and labor of the Society were chiefly devolved on the Directors, who were required to meet once a month, to procure the needful articles, and to disburse the charities of the Society. How diligently, prudently, perseveringly and successfully they performed their work, from year to year, is matter both of admiration and praise. At first, for a year or two, they met at each other's houses, and there wrought with their own hands, making up new garments, repairing old ones, counseling and praying together. Unfinished work they carried home. In the mean time they went forth, with charities in hand, on visits of mercy to the poor. The very first gift recorded is worthy of note. "Feb. 4, 1812. Voted the sum of three dollars to purchase a gown for old Mrs. Cheever." The gown was carried, with other articles from families, by two of the ladies,\* a distance of about three miles, where they found her confined with rheumatism, in a large, cold room; — her daughter had hung coverlets and blankets to keep the cold from her mother's bed, while *she*, without the inclosure, sat at her loom weaving for their support!" In searching out and visiting objects of charity, they say: "No weather was cold enough to chill our ardor, when conveying relief to want or sickness; no obstacles insurmountable; winter storms and the bleak northwest wind served but to urge us forward!"

#### VARIETY AND KIND OF CHARITIES.

The war of 1812-15 coming on, increased the wants and calls for aid. In consequence of "a pressure of work," they met oftener than once a month to meet the demand. It became expedient to hire a room for their monthly meetings, which they did in the old Peter Green house, which stood on the spot where B. W. Sanborn's Block now is.

\* Mrs. McFarland and Miss Sarah Kimball. Mrs. Cheever lived in Bow, but when well, worked in Concord, where she was well known.

To provide *material*, they first voted that cotton and woolen cloths be purchased and made into garments for distribution. As a sample of the number, kind and variety of their charitable gifts, I quote briefly from the record: A tract was given to the first convict in the State Prison, in 1812. To one poor family a suit of boy's clothes; to another a shirt, a jacket, and a pair of stockings; to a third a pound of oat meal, a quarter of tea, and some old garments; to a fourth a pound of coffee, a pound of rice, a pound of sugar, one dozen biscuits and a bushel of potatoes; to a fifth a load of wood. Here, ten dollars in money were voted for sufferers by fire in Portsmouth;\* and one dollar and fifty cents to pay widow Rodgers for a sheet which she lent to a poor woman to bury her husband in, who was a soldier. To a poor woman living on Horse-hill they gave cheap bombasett for a gown—she not having had a new one for eight years. Then a supply for a poor old colored woman. A yard and a half of new cloth, two flannel infant's shirts and some tea and sugar to a Mr. Jones, a stranger from Vermont, whose family suffered in consequence of the war. To one young lad they gave a suit of clothes and a spelling-book; to another a suit of clothing and testament, with injunctions for them to attend meeting. Here were ten dollars to support Charlotte Lovejoy at the Asylum for Deaf and Dumb at Hartford; and to a young man, a second-hand great coat, and a pair of shoes, to attend meeting.

To carry out their design of improving the moral and spiritual condition of the poor, they obtained donations of bibles and tracts, and distributed them with their other gifts. "Every donation," they say, "is accompanied with a tract."

\*The fire occurred November 22, 1813, and consumed between 300 and 400 houses.

## SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Always devising good, they watched the signs of the times. In the Report of 1817, we find the first suggestions in regard to Sunday schools in town: "Shall we not see Sabbath schools commencing among us another Spring or Summer? Time is hastening, death is approaching. Soon we shall end our devices and labors in the grave." That year the thought was realized, and Sabbath schools began. About this time a juvenile society of girls was formed, who aided the parent society in making shirts and knitting stockings for distribution.

The institution of Sabbath schools in town gave a new impulse to the zeal and charity of the Society, inasmuch as it coincided so well with their designs of elevating the moral character of the poor. "A new era seems to be opening. We would not be idle spectators, but do with our might. *Live, while we live!* We hope the time may come when the instruction of poor children may form a bright link in the chain of our charities." To meet this new era, spinning, weaving, sewing, and other work was furnished to poor families, for which payment was made in clothing. "Young girls," says the report of 1818, "have applied for work that they might furnish themselves with dresses to attend Sunday schools; while children, who for want of clothing could not attend, have been dressed in strong, home-spun cloth, for which their grateful mothers have offered to work even beyond their ability."

## INTEMPERANCE.

Eagle-eyed to detect the *causes* of poverty, as well as to relieve it, the Directors and members of this Society deserve the credit of being pioneers in the temperance reform. At the beginning, they adopted the rule, *Not to give ardent spirits in any case*; nor even wine, except as prescribed by a physician for medicine. In their visits they every where met a *cause*—a deadly foe to their well

meant charity. "An enemy," they say, "has gone before us; an enemy has followed us; obstructed our path; hedged up our way and left us in perplexity what course to pursue." Street begging, by children, sent out by intemperate parents, was common in the early years of the Society, and charities to them were abused and perverted—the very gifts being sold or exchanged for rum. "We could tell of school-books, given by the Society, taken from the children and sold for rum; of fair new tracts just bestowed, concealed in a bundle of rags and disposed of for the same article." Year after year from 1817, the Directors lamented, exposed and protested against the miseries produced by the sale and use of intoxicating liquors. "What can we do?" they ask. "We have seen the half-famished mother, the meager infant, the tattered children, and, more dreadful than either, we have seen the face of bloated intemperance in their midst. Charity has wept!" Some of the annual reports were tender and startling appeals to the rum-seller. "Dealers in this poison are the active enemies of the poor. It is *they* who expose them to the cold winds of winter, and send their crying children supperless to bed!"

#### FIRST ADDRESS BEFORE THE SOCIETY.

For fourteen years, or until 1826, the operations of the Society had been so quiet, unobtrusive and noiseless, as hardly to attract public attention. The annual meetings had simply been gatherings of from twenty to thirty members, to hear the report of the Secretary, to choose officers, to settle the account of the Treasurer, and to partake of tea and refreshments brought and furnished by themselves for the table. But the time was now come when the Society must be brought into more public notice. The circumstances are matters both of tradition and record. Boarding in the family of Mrs. Mary Ann Stickney, at whose house the monthly and annual meet-

ings were at this period held, was a gentleman—well remembered by some present—easy, indulgent, of social and generous temper, GEORGE KIMBALL, Esq., then editor of an ambitious little paper, since greatly improved and enlarged, the “New-Hampshire Statesman and Concord Register.” Hearing about the Society, “Mr. Kimball observed that a public address would be very proper at the time of the Annual Meeting, as it would lead to the greater extension of their benevolent enterprise.” Through the influence of Mr. Kimball, Mr. JAMES WHITTLE, a graduate of Dartmouth College in 1823, and then a student at law in the office of Samuel Fletcher, Esq., was invited to deliver an address at the Town Hall, on the evening of the annual meeting.\*

To many, the experiment seemed a bold one; and, on the part of the ladies, was entered on with no little doubt and trepidation. However, all due preparations were made. The famous old Town Hall was lighted “with candles dimly burning”—paths had been shoveled through the snow—and, adjourning from Mrs. Stickney’s at half past six o’clock on Tuesday evening, January 3, 1826, the ladies of the Society walked in procession, two and two, headed by George Kimball, Esq., and Mr. Whittle; entering the spacious hall, they took seats together on the south side, under the face of the ever memorable old dumb clock! On the opposite side sat the gentlemen patrons of the society—the honorables of Concord—Col. William A. Kent, George Hough, Esq., Mr. Nathaniel Abbot, Dr. Samuel Morril, Samuel Fletcher and Samuel A. Kimball, Esqs., and other friends. On hand, too, then as ever, was that paragon of faithful servants, Mr. Edward Philbrick, moving about with elastic and noiseless step—now replenishing the fire, and now gracefully snuffing the candles! Without prayer or song, the young orator proceeded; and suffice it to say, that the address was finely

\* See records of the Society for 1826.

written, full of just sentiments, and delivered in a modest but manly style, and more than equaled the highest expectations. A collection was taken for the Society, amounting to the generous sum of *seven dollars and twenty-seven cents!* The orator received the thanks of the Society, and next week the entire address appeared in the New-Hampshire Statesman, with a flattering commendation of characteristic brevity—nine lines—from the pen of the benevolent editor! Next year an address before the Society was delivered by Mr. William Gordon Webster, also a law student in Mr. Fletcher's office. Then followed one from George Kent, Esq., and next year from a young physician, Dr. Joseph Reynolds. Having used up the young lawyers and physicians in town, the Society called into their service the young clergymen; for it must be borne in mind that the old parish, which was a unit in 1812, was by this time divided, and some half dozen young ministers were trying to do the work of the old pastor, who deceased in 1827. Taking them in due order, Mr. Bouton addressed the Society in 1830; Mr. N. W. Williams, in 1831; Mr. Moses G. Thomas, in 1832; Mr. Samuel Kelley, in 1833, and Mr. E. E. Cummiugs, in 1835. Since 1840 the Annual Address has been in some church on Sabbath evening, rather than on Tuesday evening, the proper anniversary of the Society. Historical justice requires me to add, that in 1832 the Society took another advanced step. Heretofore the modesty of the Secretary would not allow her valuable reports to be read in public; but, being strongly urged, she consented that year that a portion of it should be read before the address by Rev. Mr. Thomas. It is due, also, to state that the subject of Mr. Bouton's address was *rum-selling and street-begging*, which, being a very unpopular theme at that time, reduced the collection to \$5.22, while that taken after Mr. Thomas' address, with the aid of the modest Secretary's report, amounted to the extraordinary sum of \$18.65!

## A LEGACY.

Having now gained a place in the public regard, by increased numbers and means, the Directors began to extend their operations, and to open new channels for their charities. In 1826, a legacy fell to them from Mr. JOHN KENT, son of Col. William A. Kent, a young man of great promise, of devoted piety and benevolence, who deceased in Boston at the age of 25 years. At his funeral in this town, there was general sorrow and mourning. The stores were all closed, as the procession passed along Main street to the old grave-yard. The legacy amounted to fifty dollars, to be paid in annual installments of ten dollars each.

## MISSIONARY AND MISSION SCHOOLS.

To reach the poor families in and about the main village, to gather poor children into both Sabbath and day schools, to reclaim the vicious, and to carry reformatory influences to all whose habits degraded and impoverished them, the Society decided, in 1829, to employ a missionary awhile, who should devote his time and labors to that work. Accordingly Mr. HENRY SHEDD, just from the Theological Seminary at Andover, was engaged, and served the Society several months with fidelity, acceptance and usefulness. The expense, however, was chiefly defrayed by private subscription. To carry out their plan still more effectually, next year they opened both a Sabbath and a day-school in what was called "the Colony"—a little out-of-the-way neighborhood beyond Sand-hill on Franklin street. "There," says the report, "each Sabbath morning, a school consisting of twenty-two scholars was instructed by four faithful teachers." The room where they met was generously fitted up by the owner, the late Mr. Richard Herbert, and was occupied, also, during the week, for a free school, for a term of twenty-five weeks. An average of twenty-two scholars attended, from the

age of two and a half, to fourteen years. The school was taught by Miss Susan Dow and Miss Elizabeth McFarland\*—young ladies of precious memory—whose works and name will long survive their early death. Beside common branches, young girls were taught to sew and knit; while the minds of all were stored with Scripture knowledge.

#### ANOTHER LEGACY.

Let me here record an event, which, about this time, came to the knowledge of the Society, that added fresh zeal to their labors. Among those who had felt a tender sympathy for the poor, and a silent interest in the Society's labors, was a comely, delicate and accomplished young lady—one of three sisters—a daughter of the second Mrs. William A. Kent—Miss MARGARET TUCKER. She was a frail flower, that began to fade almost before its full bloom! Modest, sensitive, timid, shrinking from the public eye, she loved to go alone into the abodes of want, carrying little delicacies which she gave with her own gentle hand to the sick and the aged. Among those whom she thus visited were an aged worthy pair, Mr. Nathaniel Meserve and wife, whom the Charitable Society had for many years relieved—giving them the value of a dollar a month. They lived in a little house, since much enlarged, where John C. Briggs, Esq., now resides.† Aware that her life would probably be short, and possessed of property in her own right, Miss Tucker had it in her heart to provide for the comfort of that aged pair, should they survive her. She purchased the house and land where they lived. In November, 1832, she deceased

\* Miss McFarland, second daughter of Rev. Dr. McFarland, married the Rev. Edward Buxton, of West Boscawen, and died in September, 1842, aged 34.

† Since the delivery of this Discourse, Mrs. Lucy H., wife of Mr. Briggs, a woman of estimable character, and late Secretary of the Society, died in this house, February 10, aged 30 years.

in Boston. Soon after, the Society received notice, from the executor of her will, that Miss Tucker had given the use and improvement of the said land and dwelling-house thereon, to Mr. and Mrs. Meserve, and also bequeathed to them the income of \$1,000 during their life. After the decease of both, then, she said : "It is my will, and I accordingly order and direct that my executor pay over the *principal* to the Concord Female Charitable Society in New-Hampshire ; to which the same is hereby given and bequeathed." The gratitude with which this legacy was received was recorded in fit terms : "The youthful donor," says the record, "had gone beyond our thanks before we were made acquainted with her kindness. We may thank Him who put it into her heart. The legacy is now doing the work of charity to aged worth, and is more grateful to us by the very circumstance which detains it."\* Mr. Meserve died November 3, 1839, aged 91, and his wife March 10, 1844, aged 84 years. The net legacy, amounting to \$827.68, came fully into possession of the Society in November, 1845.

[At this point, the delivery of the Discourse was suspended, and the congregation, rising, united in singing, in the Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book, hymn 873, page 211:]

Father of mercies, send thy grace  
 All powerful from above,  
 To form in our obedient souls  
 The image of thy love.

Oh, may our sympathizing breasts  
 That generous pleasure know,  
 Kindly to share in others' joy,  
 And weep for others' woe !

When poor and helpless sons of grief  
 In deep distress are laid,  
 Soft be our hearts their pains to feel,  
 And swift our hands to aid.

\* Annual Report of 1833.

So Jesus looked on dying men  
 When throned above the skies ;  
 And, in the Father's bosom blest,  
 He felt compassion rise.

On wings of love the Saviour flew,  
 To raise us from the ground,  
 And made the richest of his blood  
 A balm for every wound !

#### THE CHARMED BASKET.

We resume the narrative. How the Directors proceeded from year to year in dispensing their charities, we may learn, in part, from a brief history of what we may call the *Charmed Basket*. I have seen the wonderful thing. Could it be placed on exhibition, I am sure it would be worth much more to look at than most of the wonderful curiosities for which we pay so dear ! Should the marvelous basket ever be laid aside, I now bespeak for it a place in the archives of the New-Hampshire Historical Society, as a perpetual memorial of its own unconscious charity ! To me it is as mysterious, not to say miraculous, as the “cruse of oil,” and the “barrel of meal” which the prophet blessed for the poor widow ! The basket has an humble place in the truth-telling records of the Society. Some seem never to have noticed it; but there has it been for fifty years, always full of just the things that any poor body—man or woman, boy or girl, sick or well—could ever want; yet it would seem, from the monthly distribution out of it, that it must always be empty. At one meeting, there goes out from it “some flannel to a woman whose husband is sick,” and “a coat to a poor child ;” next, “a sheet and pillow-cases loaned to a poor woman in sickness, and a dress for another ;” then “a robe for a child’s burial,” and “sundry articles to a poor woman with an infant two weeks old.” Now issues a comfortable; then “little aprons and dresses for children ; cotton cloth to be made up into garments ; sheets loaned to

the sick; shirts, and pants, and jackets to fit children for meeting or sabbath school." The last we hear of the basket is in 1854, when there goes from it "about four dollars in articles to a family of old people, feeble, and having the care of two infant grand-children!" To satisfy any laudable curiosity, I will add that, on a careful inquiry, I have found out the mystery in part. It is a veritable basket of about one bushel's capacity, made of the best ash material—still apparently as good as new—having a handle and cover so as to be transported from place to place, where the Directors should meet. The only real "*charm*" about it is *the charm of woman's ingenuity and charity!* It was purchased the first year of the Society's labors, together with a quantity of linen, worth six dollars and six cents; and ever since it has been the common depository of articles made or to be made, to be given or loaned for the benefit of the sick and poor. It has always been kept full by the handi-work of the Directors and members; yet always open for liberal disbursement. I am told, however, that though the basket is still in use, it has been in great measure superseded by a CHEST more capacious, and, perhaps, under lock and key, a little safer with its enlarged contents.

Here, let us observe, the Directors have sometimes thought it necessary to apologize for aiding the families of vicious and intemperate men, although using great caution in this regard: "We feel no compunction," say they, "for giving, when we enter the poor, scanty hovel, and behold, as we have sometimes done, two or three sick and suffering, with but an apology for a bed on which together they might stretch their tossing and burning frames! Neither have we, when we have beheld, in dead of winter, children hanging about the mother, without shoes or stockings, and with clothing hardly more than for a summer day—when we knew, too, that mother did all she could, though the father might and ought to have done more. No. If we must be debarred from opening the hand in such a

case, then we will retire from the field, and others, *not females*, we think, must be the almoners." \*

THE COUNTESS.

New avenues of charity were opened. Providence smiled on their plans, and from unexpected quarters furnished additional resources. Residing among us was a lady, whose life was a romance and whose title was an enigma. The Countess of Rumford, born in our goodly town about 1774, a grand-daughter of the first minister, Rev. Timothy Walker, had passed the greater part of a maiden life in foreign countries—in Belgium, London and Paris. There she had shared the fortunes, and inherited in part the honors of her distinguished father, BENJAMIN THOMPSON, who, as a reward for his public beneficence, bore the title of Count Rumford. Returning in advanced life to her native town and family mansion, she lived in quiet and almost lone retirement, improving her grounds, husbanding her ample resources, and, as appears, meditating charitable uses for her property after she should need it no more. She deceased December 2, 1852, at the age of 78. Among the large bequests which the countess left by will was \$20,000 to found the Rolfe and Rumford Asylum in Concord, for poor widows and orphan girls; and \$2,000 to the Concord Female Charitable Society. With grateful hearts was this legacy received. Immediately thereupon a plan was projected of expending a part of the annual income in sustaining an industrial or sewing school for poor children. "No sooner," say the Directors, in their Annual Report of 1853, "were the existing officers made aware of the fact of the recent bequest, than we began to feel that new and increased responsibilities were laid upon us. A plan of school which should collect the children of the more needy, on the leisure of Saturday afternoon, suggested itself, as promising to be highly beneficial in many respects. We

\* Report of 1850.

might furnish them material on which they might learn to sew, and instruct them in making articles for themselves; we might impart to them moral truth and wholesome suggestion, while seeking to foster in them self-respect, promptness, neatness, love of order and a general appropriate manner; and thus, as we conceived, to the best of our ability, fulfill the wishes of our late esteemed friend"—alluding to Mrs. McFarland, whose hopes looked forward to such a realization. Suffice it, that the plan thus conceived and carried out, has so far proved a complete success. Instituted in the Spring of 1853, the school, under the management of the Directors, has been instructed by ladies appointed for the purpose, aided by the volunteer services of younger ladies, who thereby are accustoming themselves to a noble charity, in training poor children for comfort, respectability and usefulness. The first year there were sixty different scholars, and the number of articles wrought by and given to them was 269. Next year the number of scholars was eighty, of whom seventy were present at the closing session in the Fall. What added to the interest and beauty of the scene at the close was, that the seventy little girls all appeared in new uniform dresses made up by themselves, from calico presented by the late Mayor, Gen. JOSEPH Low. The following year JOSEPH A. GILMORE, Esq., made a similar generous present to the members of the school. Sustained by the charity of the Society, from May till October, each year, and kept in two divisions, at the North and South sections of our village, the school may now be considered a permanent institution. It is called the *Rumford Charity School*. This last year there were 101 scholars, of whom ninety-one were regular attendants, with nineteen teachers, and the whole number of articles finished by them was four hundred and four.

The Society, in 1853, obtained from the New-Hampshire Legislature an act of incorporation, allowing it to hold funds to an amount not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.

What remains to be said of the operations of the Society I must be content to group together under the head of

RESULTS. — I. NUMBER AIDED.

The whole number of families aided by the Society from the beginning, we are unable to state with exactness; but the records enable us to approximate to it very nearly. The average annual number aided the first ten years, or from

1812	to	1822	was	39
1822	to	1832	was	33
1832	to	1842	was	35
1842	to	1852	was	40
1852	to	1862	was	53
			—	290
			—	Annual average,      40

or *two thousand* families in fifty years. These, however, are not so many *different* families; but, in many cases, include the same from year to year. The individuals benefited may be put at four or five times that number, embracing all ages and descriptions of poor, sick and unfortunate among us, but mostly made up of poor and aged widows and young children.

In the celebrated painting, by West, of Christ healing the sick, the painter groups the various scenes in which the Saviour showed his compassion and mercy, and presents them to our eye in one view. We behold at his feet the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, the paralytic, the leper; mothers bearing sick babes in their arms; fathers supplicating for lunatic sons; aged ones bending with infirmities; and young children with upturned eyes beseeching his help. There stands the Son of God, with benevolent aspect and outstretched hands, while words of benediction drop from his lips, and the healing virtue issues from his heart. So, in humble measure and in imitation of Jesus, has this Society been a blessing to all kinds and descrip-

tions of needy sufferers whom it had the means of reaching. Eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, a tongue to the dumb ; it has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the prisoner, taken in the stranger, given a home to the homeless, wiped the widow's tears, received orphans to its bosom, and been a staff to the aged ; it has watched at the couch of the sick, smoothed the pillow of the dying, lighted their pathway through the dark valley, commended their departing spirits to the Lord Jesus, and robed their bodies for the grave.

## II. AMOUNT EXPENDED.

In its fifty years' labors of charity, the Society has expended a sum which may seem large in the aggregate, but small, considering the number it has relieved and the amount of good accomplished. In the records, we have a statement of the sums annually expended, with the exception of six years, in which the accounts appear to be indefinite, but which we are able to average. The expenditure in the first ten years,

From 1812 to 1822 was \$353.16 ; average, \$35.81	
" 1822 to 1832 was 556.35 ; average, 55.68	
" 1832 to 1842 was 879.29 ; average, 87.92	
" 1842 to 1852 was 1133.00 ; average, 113.30	
" 1852 to 1862 was 2824.98 ; average, 282.49	
Total in fifty years, \$5746.78	\$574.65
Making an annual average of	\$114.93

Allow me here to state that the increased expenditure for the last ten years has been, chiefly, for the Rumford Charity School — the materials being purchased — which have been worked up by the girls in attendance, and then given to them. Little books, also, have been given as rewards ; which, with necessary incidentals and undiminished charities to poor families, account for the whole sum. Among the items of aid for the poor, during the last ten or fifteen years, the single article of *wood* swells

to a considerable sum.\* It ought to be understood that the whole work, on the part of the Society, from the first, has been an entire gratuity; and that it can use with advantage all the funds intrusted to it.

### III. SOURCES OF INCOME.

Is it now inquired whence were these funds obtained? We answer: 1. From the annual tax on the members of one dollar, until 1836 — since which it has been fifty cents. 2. From the contributions at the annual meetings since the year 1826, amounting, on an average, to about \$40 a year. The contribution in 1839 was \$42.79, including \$10 which was inclosed in a little note that read as follows:

To their "Sisters of Charity"—  
Charlotte Kent  
and  
Margaret Kent.  
"Being dead yet speaketh."

Some may imagine that this was a genuine "spirit communication;" but historical truth requires me to say that the note was written in a well recognized *man's* hand!

3. A third source of income has been free-will offerings—the generous gifts of individuals, both gentlemen and ladies, interested in the Society's object. These gifts have been of various kinds; articles of clothing, food, groceries, cloth to be made up, money and precious legacies. Beside those which I have already mentioned—Mr. John Kent's legacy \$50; Miss Margaret Tucker's, \$827.68; the Countess of Rumford's, \$2,000—Paul Wentworth, Esq., in 1851, gave, as a permanent fund,† \$100; and Hon. Frank. Pierce, in 1858, made a donation of \$130.

\* I have counted on the record the gift, at different times, of sixty-six loads of wood, which is only a part of the whole.

+ "I, this twelfth day of September, 1851, give and pay the Concord Female Charitable Society one hundred dollars, to remain as a permanent fund with their other funds; the interest to be expended annually.

\$100. (Signed) PAUL WENTWORTH."

Of these donations and legacies, *three thousand dollars* now constitute an invested fund, the annual interest of which is expended for the objects of the society.

#### IV. NUMBER OF MEMBERS.

I have not undertaken to ascertain the total membership from the beginning; but at the close of 1812, there were thirty-seven; in 1832, fifty-five; in 1852, eighty-three; and at the present time, 1862, there are one hundred and ninety-four paying members.

As a part of this Society's Memorial, it gives me great pleasure to add that, since its organization, with the increase of population and the rise of new religious societies, it has given origin to kindred associations; which, without envy or rivalry, but only with that generous competition which incites to love and good works, are, in their respective spheres, completing the work of charity for the poor in all sections of our city. Among these associations of charity, this Society claims no other precedence than that she is the mother of them all!\* How much the city owes to these several associations, in diminishing the number of inmates in our alms-house, and

\* The following are the charitable associations in our city:

UNITARIAN. Female Benevolent Association — formed January, 1835. Number of members in 1861, 31. Disbursed in 1861, \$115.85. Pupils in Sewing School, 72.

FIRST BAPTIST. Concord Female Relief Society — formed September, 1839; named changed, in 1847, to Baptist Female Charitable Society. Number of members in 1861, 54. Disbursed in 1861, \$199.72.

METHODIST. Sewing Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church — formed in June, 1847. Number of members, 35. Disbursed in 1861, \$70.

PLEASANT STREET BAPTIST. Formed in October, 1853. Number of members, 45. Disbursed in 1861, \$75.

There are also charitable associations connected with the West and with the East Congregational Societies in Concord.

reducing the public expense for the support of the poor generally, is well worthy of consideration by those who object to this kind of charity; and justly do they deserve the encouragement of our Municipal Authorities and the patronage and gratitude of all the inhabitants.

#### INFLUENCES.

In this great work of charity, it may seem invidious to intimate that any individuals are worthy of more commendation than others. Just praise is due to all. But yet, from the beginning, the chief effective labor has devolved on the DIRECTORS. At first, they were only five in number; in 1836, increased to eight; and in 1841 to twelve. Their monthly meetings, sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, were useful in more respects than one. They were seasons of forming and cultivating hallowed associations and friendships—cemented by the sweet bonds both of charity to the poor and love to the Saviour! Incidentally, here and there, they have placed their experience on record. In the language of the report of 1847, “May we not hope, dear sisters, that we are laying aside, from year to year, simple mementos, not only by the hearth-stones of the poor, but in our own hearts also, which shall be as enduring as the soul itself? If, in the future world, all motives to friendship shall fade away, except such as are based on moral worth, then remembrances of earth, which have been linked with virtuous aim, shall be doubly dear. Among these remembrances such associations as this, inasmuch as they contribute to the increase of faith, and hope, and Christian love, will prove rich investments of treasure worthy of that immortal state.” With beautiful simplicity the Directors record that, “among our earliest recollections as distributors of our charity, that of tears on furrowed cheeks is indelibly engraven.” “Over the bounties of this Society the grateful tear has often been shed. The aged, near the borders of another world, have blessed and prayed for us.”

Not to attempt to trace all the blessed influences of the Society, we may say that, during the last fifty years, it has been a living CHARITY POWER, stirring the hearts of this community to generous affections and worthy deeds; kindling the gratitude of the poor; awakening aspirations for a better condition in the minds of many children and youth, and putting them in a way to rise to intelligence, temporal comfort and moral worth. This evening the Society can look over its list of beneficiaries, and behold or recall some respectable, talented and useful members of society, who are also ornaments of a Christian profession, and can humbly say, THESE, also, are our MEMORIAL!

#### NOTICES OF DECEASED MEMBERS.

It is time, however, that I should close. But is it not meet that ere we separate we should pay an affectionate and grateful tribute to the worthy women who have already finished their labors of charity on earth; whose names live, whose memories are fragrant, and whose works will long follow them? Will it not, at least, be pleasant to look on their portraits and contemplate their distinctive qualities and virtues? If we prefer it, we may go and visit their tombs, and cast fresh garlands on graves which we have already watered with tears of affection.

I would gladly mention them all, did the hour permit; but it will not, I trust, be deemed invidious, if, of necessity, passing over some, I recall those who have held a more prominent place in the Society's counsels and labors, or whose age, and circumstances of whose death, at the time, attracted particular notice.

Living along the line of Main street, thirty years ago and more, was a class of women, of about the same age, and of like social standing, who, were they now living, would range between ninety and one hundred years of age.

Their houses were home-factories for all manner of articles for domestic use, and a portion for the poor. There

were the wheel and the loom. The women sought wool and flax, and worked willingly with their hands. Literally, they laid their hands to the spindle and their hands held the distaff. At the same time they stretched out their hand to the poor, and reached forth their hands to the needy. Of most of those who were then members of this Society, my recollections are now fresh. Beside the original members, whose names we have recalled, there was then living at the "eleven lots," Mrs. SARAH, wife of Dea. Jonathan Wilkins, an early member, a woman "of fair countenance," prudent, industrious, and kind-hearted, the mother of nine daughters,\* of whom one, at least, has well filled her mother's place in this Society. Mrs. Wilkins died in 1826, aged 55. Amid the large cares of a public house, was the affable and kind Mrs. Abel Hutchins, a member, from whose plentiful table went many a good meal to feed the poor and hungry, who deceased at the age of 85. We recall, in this connexion, that ancient model of lady-like manners, of quick wit, and an entertaining companion of the young at fourscore years, the mother of Col. William A. Kent, who often received the thanks of the Society for articles which her own hands wrought, and who worked for the Society till death released her, in 1827, at the age of 90. Of like spirit, too, was her daughter, Madam Huldah Evans, wife of the second pastor of the town, who retained her early membership till her death, in 1846, at the age of 84.

The house recently consumed by fire, on Main street, opposite the Free Bridge road, was, in former days, a store-house of plenty; from its door no poor was ever sent empty away; there lived, about sixty years, and there died, in 1837, at the age of 76, a woman of whom the record thus speaks: "Death has removed the oldest member of this Society, the honored and beloved Mrs. SUSAN AYER; in her we ever found the 'cheerful giver,' the

\* It might be added, and of four sons.

ready helper! Age chilled not the warmth of her benevolence; but good works were not her trust. Through the merits of her Redeemer she looked forward to an inheritance that fadeth not away." To which I may add, while her example, living, was a pattern of charity and faith — dying, she left a LIFE-LEGACY to the Society of more value than even gold and silver! "Her daughters rise up and call her blessed!"

Resident a little further north, was a woman whose whole life was a charity, not to the poor only, but to neighbors, kindred and friends, in all times of need; a charity all the more grateful because sweetly mixed with nature's sympathies, and with pleasant words of wit and humor. Her services were deemed equally necessary, and rendered with equal cheerfulness, both at life's dawn and life's close. Of her it has truly been said, "she not only knew *what* to do, but *how* to do it just in the right time and right manner!" Calm was the evening of her long day! But at length her lamp, that had burned brightly, with scarcely a flickering, went out. Mrs. MARY ODLIN, native born, and being, at the time, the oldest person in town, deceased in 1859, at the age of 92.

Who present, of the older members of the Society, will not to-night think of the good, motherly widow, SARAH DEARBORN, living in the old yellow house on the hill, where the State House *ought* to have stood, whose benevolent spirit exceeded her means of giving: with whose name we will associate, though of later service and memory, the estimable daughter, always thought of in her two-fold relation, Mrs. ALMIRA DAVIS EVANS.\* On the other side of the street was Mrs. ELIZABETH, the industrious, conversible, careful, "hopeful," prayerful consort

\* She first married Mr. Robert Davis, 2d, who died in 1825. Her second husband was Mr. Asaph Evans, who died in New-York, January 8, 1842. Mrs. Evans died suddenly in Chelsea, Ms., at the house of her son, Charles A. Davis, M. D., but her remains were brought to Concord for burial.

of the late Dea. Samuel Morril, for many years a Director, and always an efficient member of the Society.\* Next, the kind-hearted, toilsome, patient and cheerful Mrs. SARAH HIRBERT. A few rods further, in yonder house, you see a woman of elastic step, busy in domestic affairs, tidy, earnest, conscientious, religious; a lover of hospitality, a "succorer of many" ministers of the gospel, and "of me also;" for many years a hard working Director of the Society, Mrs. NATHANIEL ABBOT scarcely outlived her usefulness; at the good old age of 83, departing in the faith, hope and peace which the gospel inspires.

Belonging to this class of ancient and excellent women, were several who lived out of the main village, whose names are a memorial of their worth. I mention them as representatives of the Society in their respective neighborhoods. On the east side of the river was Mrs. MEHITABLE, wife of Capt. Jonathan Ambrose, a distributer there of the Society's tracts and charities. On the west side Mrs. ESTHER, wife of Mr. Moses Farnum, a woman in whom faith and works were beautifully blended. Mrs. RUTH, wife of Henry Chandler—a lady both by nature and grace—who could weave, or spin, or knit, for the benefit of the Society, and be thankful for the privilege: from her also fell another life-legacy to the Society. So her strong-handed and industrious neighbor, Mrs. HANNAH BALLARD, would pay her annual tax in work or money, as needed. At the south-west section of the town was Miss MARY CLARK, some time a Director and efficient helper, but whose ethereal spirit at length bounded away to embrace the poor and down-trodden in regions more remote. To whom, I will take the liberty to add the name of one still living, who, absent in body but present in spirit, yet claims the right to pay her annual tax, and

\* With Mrs. Morril should be associated the names of her two sisters—daughters of the late Dea. John Kimball: viz., Mrs. Anna True, who died in 1850, aged 77; and Mrs. Hannah, wife of Rev. Sylvester Dana, who died in 1847, aged 69.

is as ready to knit and sew for the poor, at the age of 91, as ever! Still life and peace to Mrs. Nancy Philbrick.\*

Who now will reckon it invidious;—who will not be happy to have entered on this Memorial the names of others, of more recent memory, whose works of charity do follow them? May I put before you the likeness of the second President of the Society, Mrs. MARGARET KENT, a woman of peculiar grace and dignity, whose charities were as munificent as her means: of Mrs. NANCY B. FLETCHER, wife of Samuel Fletcher, Esq., Treasurer of the Society ten years; then a Director, and the President from 1839 till her sudden and lamented death in 1842—a woman “whose adorning was not that of broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, which becometh a woman professing godliness, of good works.” Her sincere and friendly spirit; her simple, unaffected manners, sensible conversation, sound judgment, humble piety and consistent life, gave her a place in the esteem of this community which very few ever attained!

Following somewhat in order the Society’s record from year to year, our hearts are touched by names that were dear to us while living, and will long be cherished in memory. Two of these, you will pardon me, if I pass over in “expressive silence.”† But who will not be pleased to recall the image, sympathetic tears and earnest labors of Mrs. SAMPSON BULLARD, a working Director, who herself became a sufferer, requiring care and sympathy almost beyond any that her own gentle hand ever relieved.‡ Also the intelligent, resolute, self-reliant, perhaps over-generous Mrs. LUCIA ANN, wife of George Kent, Esq., both Treasurer and a Director in

\* She now resides with a kinsman, at Epping, but pays her various charitable donations annually in Concord;—a member of the First Congregational Church.

† See Secretary’s Reports of 1829 and 1840.

‡ She died in Littleton, N. H.

the Society : Mrs. MARY HATCH GEORGE, an efficient and kind helper, whose place was in the church one day, and on the bed of death the next :\* Mrs. PORTER BLANCHARD, whose felicitous temper and speech, handi-works, and house accommodations for the Directors, are sweet memorials of her worth. Of more retiring disposition, but not less interested in charity, was her neighbor, Mrs. CLARISSA, wife of Dr. Thomas Chadbourne, several years a Director, whose sudden death, though in sweet peace and hope, filled a large circle with mourning. How pleasant was the smile, and hearty the welcome, which we used to receive from the vivacious and affable Mrs. ELLIOT CHICKERING.

Why should I forbear to mention some younger in years, whose tender and earnest interest in the Society gave promise of extended usefulness, but whose premature death blasted our hopes, and filled many loved circles with sorrow and tears ! The same year, 1849, says the record, that the oldest original member, Mrs. Mary Thorndike Walker died, at the age of 76, her namesake, the youngest member, also deceased, under circumstances which sent thrills of sorrow through our community. Young, amiable, pious, unassuming, yet earnest, at the age of 23, "she did but step across a little rill, and time was passed into eternity." Her early grave has never ceased to be strewed with emblems of sorrow and affection.† Soon followed, from the same neighborhood, a comely and lovely young wife,‡ whose heart embraced the objects of the Society ; of whom the record is, "Hers was a short and pleasant course ; cheerful and happy in

\* She died December 6, 1847, aged 62, after about twenty-four hours' sickness.

† Mrs. Mary T. Low, wife of Mr. Franklin Low, only daughter of Mr. George Hutchins, died August 4, 1849, aged 23.

‡ Mrs. P. Maria, wife of Abraham J. Prescott, died September 23, 1852, aged 31.

life, when death came leisurely and sure, she had nothing to fear, for her home was in heaven." No less to be mourned was the early death of one who held the office of Vice-President of the Society, whose amiable virtues attracted universal esteem — the wife of the Rev. N. E. Marble, in 1854, at the age of 29. Sad and dark was the day when it was told, from door to door, that the calm, meditative, intent and reverent spirit of Mrs. MARCIA HERBERT HOLT was to be with us no more.\*

Let your own recollections add the names of others — equally precious — and perhaps more worthy of being embalmed in sweet memories ; though I will name the last on the record, Mrs. CHARLES MOODY, whose heart clung to the Society, after sickness laid her aside, and her hands were unable to help it.

"Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud!"

But "we sorrow not, as those who have no hope."

For them no bitter tear we shed —  
Their night of pain and grief is o'er :  
But weep — our lonely path to tread,  
And see the forms we loved no more!

To the surviving and still active members of the Society I need add no other or higher motives to perseverance in their charitable work, than the facts that these memorials furnish. Your memorial remains to be written. The materials, in part, are already gathered. In a few years, at farthest, all will be completed. Generations of the charitable succeed each other, like successions in every department of nature. May the next exceed the present in faith, in love, in sweet charity, and more extended usefulness. Only let me exhort you, and those who shall take your place, — Be faithful to the distinctive and noble objects of your Society ; to the principles on which it was

\* She died September 12, 1857, aged 81.

founded—a “consideration of your accountability to God,” imitation of the Saviour of mankind, and charity to the poor! May each of you, and those who shall come after you, have the memorial on earth and the memorial in heaven—even the commendation of the Son of God, “**SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD!**”

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